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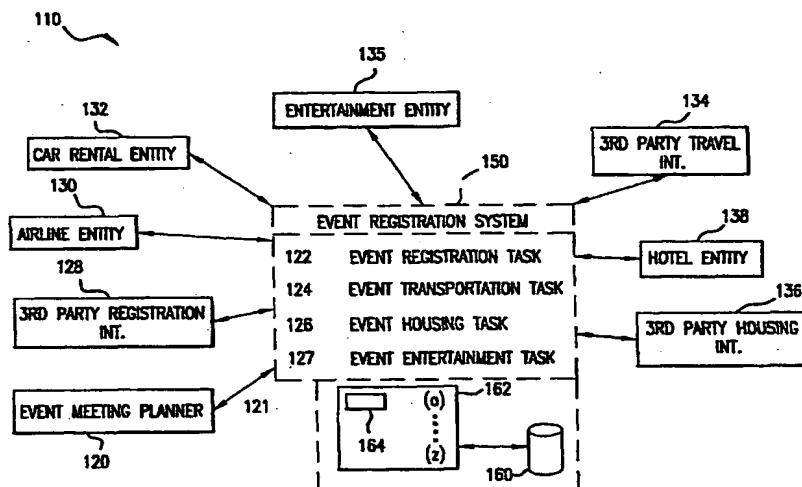
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(54) Title: **INTERNET ATTENDEE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**



(57) Abstract: An internet based system (110) for providing event services, comprising a plurality of attributes defining an event, a means for an event planner (120) to enter the attributes into at least one database (160) and to subsequently adjust the attributes, an event registration system (150) possessing internet connectivity to an event web page (310), the event registration system (150) further comprising, at least one server (162) in communication with the database (160), at least one application (164) on each server (162) capable of communicating with at least one external entity and at least one of the databases (160) so that the data in the at least one database (160) can influence the operation of the at least one application (164), and a means for a user to access the database (160) and interact with the attributes.

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INTERNET ATTENDEE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

(1) Field of the Invention

This invention relates to an internet enabled methodology for performing event registration, and more particularly to a computer architecture designed to implement an automated, on-line system for coordinating event registration tasks.

(2) Description of the Related Art

It is a common place occurrence for organizational entities to participate in events. Such events include, but are not limited to, conventions, annual gatherings of an organization's members, seminars, and the like. As a result, an entity, typically an individual, serves as the event meeting planner and coordinates the attributes of the event as well as the registration of attendees to the event. Attributes might include, but are not limited to, transportation, housing, and entertainment providers available to meet the needs of an attendee, location of the event, dates and duration of the event, etc. Traditional event registration and reservation systems require event meeting planners to manage, among other things, the registration, transportation, and housing needs of the event attendees using phone or fax communications. Figure 1 illustrates a typical process prevalent in the industry at present and known from the prior art. Process 10 includes an event planner 20 in bi-directional communication with the entities responsible for performing event registration 22, event transportation 24, and event housing 26.

Event registration 22 is performed by a third party registration intermediary 28 such as any of a number of organizations specializing in providing to event meeting planners event registration services including preparing and mailing badges, developing reports, confirming and canceling reservations, etc. Third party registration intermediary 28 receives registration data from the event planner 20 via phone lines and reports registration data to event planner 20. Third party registration intermediary 28 performs the additional tasks of developing a registration process, developing a registration form, preparing and mailing badges to event participants, managing registration changes and cancellations, faxing, emailing and mailing event attendees, developing reports, collecting and processing registration fees, and running onsite registration.

Event transportation 24 is performed by an airline entity 30 and car rental entity 32. Both airline entity 30 and car rental entity 32 are illustrative of the many travel related entities engaged in providing a common mode of transportation to customers. Additional such entities such as bus companies and cruise lines, while not represented in process 10, could be included if required and would function identically to both airline entity 30 and car rental entity 32. Event transportation 24 may be additionally performed by third party travel intermediary 34. Third party travel intermediary 34 typically consists of any of a number of commercial travel agencies which book and bill individuals and entities for the travel related services of individual airlines, car rental companies, and the like. Event transportation 24 is comprised of the subtasks of booking the official airline and car rental firm of the event, developing the booking system, receiving reports from airlines, and monitoring the usage by attendees of the travel related entities comprising airline entity 30 and car rental entity 32.

Both airline entity 30 and car rental entity 32 are in direct, bi-directional contact with event planner 20. As used herein, bi-directional contact refers to the ability of each of two parties or entities to both send and receive information to and from each other. In addition, airline entity 30 and car rental entity 32 are in direct, bi-directional contact with third party travel intermediary 34. As a result, there are two methods by which the event planner 20 can meet the transportation needs of the event attendees. Event planner 20 may interface directly with airline entity 30 and car rental entity 32 or communicate directly with third party travel intermediary 34, which in turn contacts airline entity 30 and car rental entity 32.

Event housing task 26 may be performed by third party housing intermediary 36 and hotel entity 38. Third party housing intermediary 36 typically consists of any of a number of commercial housing agencies which book and bill individuals and entities for the housing related services of hotels, motels, and the like. Hotel entity 38 is illustrative of the many housing related entities engaged in providing housing to customers and event attendees. Additional such entities such as motels, while not represented in process 10, could be included if required and would function identically to hotel entity 38. Event housing task 26 is comprised of the subtasks of booking blocks of rooms at a hotel, monitoring block availability, managing attendee changes and cancellations, and managing "cut-off dates."

Hotel entity 38 is in direct bi-directional communication with the third party travel intermediary 34, the third party housing intermediary 36, and the event planner 20. It is therefore possible for the event planner 20 to meet the housing requirements of the attendees by communicating with the hotel entity 38 directly or through either the third party travel intermediary 34 or the third party housing intermediary 36.

Typically, the process 10 is commenced by a prospective attendee contacting the event planner 20 by phone or by fax. The aforementioned direct connections between the event planner 20 and the travel related entities are typically comprised of phone and fax links. The difficulty inherent in process 10 when an attendee seeks to register, book transportation, and book housing in real time is apparent. Phone and fax communications between the event planner and travel, housing, and registration related entities are slow and unreliable. For example, it might be necessary to book an attendee's rental car via third party travel intermediary 34. Third party travel intermediary 34 could be experiencing trouble contacting car rental entity 32. Information indicative of this trouble will likely be slow in arriving to event planner 20 from car rental entity 32 for purposes of suggesting an alternative to attendee. In addition, once booked, confirmation of a car rental may be sent by car rental entity 32 directly to attendee via fax. If the attendee does not have access to a secure fax machine, confirmation may be sent by mail. Either method involves a considerable increase in the time required to book and confirm a rental car reservation and could make the real time registration and booking of the travel and housing needs of the attendee impractical. Because many attendees are hesitant to commit to registering for an event before they are certain that their travel and housing needs have been met, this shortcoming of process 10 tends to reduce the number of attendees willing to register for an event.

In addition, because the registration and booking of housing and travel needs are accomplished often times through intermediaries as well as through direct contact with travel and housing entities by the event planner 20, there is no current and easily accessible database through which to track entity utilization. For example, event planner 20 may contract with two separate hotel chains to act each as a hotel entity 38. In order to secure from each hotel entity 38 a low, bulk rate for the event, such a contract usually requires the event planner to guarantee that an agreed upon minimum number of rooms to be occupied by attendees is met. Failure to reach this number may result in a financial

penalty to be charged to event planner 20. It would be advantageous to event planner 20 to have real time access to a database which tracked and displayed the absolute and relative occupancy rates of the two hotel chains by attendees. Consider for example the instance in which the event planner 20 has contracted with each of two hotel entities 38 to provide at least twenty attendee occupants for a total of forty attendee occupants. Assume that fifty attendees register for the event and book rooms with the two hotel entities 38. Consider that, instead of there being twenty-five attendee occupants at each hotel entity 38, there are forty in one and ten in the other. In this instance, the needs of the event planner 20, the attendee, and the hotel entities 38 are poorly met.

It would be quite helpful to have a centralized database of all hotel bookings which is accessible to both the event planner 20 and the hotel entity 38. Were such a database to exist, event planner 20 would be aware that the high number of event attendees will still result in a financial penalty as a result of the uneven distribution of attendee hotel bookings between the two hotel entities 38. It would be further preferable if, after accessing such data, event planner 20 could take steps to more evenly distribute future attendee bookings amongst the hotel entities 38. Likewise, if a hotel entity 38 had immediate access to the data concerning the number of attendees who had booked reservations at their hotel, they might move quickly to extend an additional block of rooms at the same low rate to the event planner 20. As the attendees ultimately bear the cost of price inefficiencies in the process 10, the ability by event planners 20 and hotel entities 38 to adapt to registration and reservation patterns, and act accordingly will pay dividends to the attendees as well. While this example is presented with respect to booking hotel accommodations and the event housing task 26, it likewise extends to the aforementioned event transportation task 24. There exists therefore a need for a centralized database which records event related information in a form readable by and accessible to event planners 20 and related event entities.

In addition, one large draw to many attendees consists of the accommodations and opportunities available to them outside the parameters of the event per se. For example, many national organizations select different cities each year in which to hold their events.

Oftentimes, attendees will arrive early at the site of the event, stay late, experience an array of entertainment opportunities outside of the event during the span of the event, or some combination thereof. However, because the event planner 20 is not necessarily familiar

with each new city in which the event is to be held, the event planner 20 is not in the best position to find and make known to prospective attendees site specific information which might make the event especially attractive. There exists therefore a need for a centralized database accessible to event planners 20, specific to each event site, which makes available
5 extraneous information pertaining to entertainment opportunities at each site.

There exists a need for an internet enabled event registration system to integrate the provision of event related services to prospective attendees, to centralize the source from which these services may be acquired, and to facilitate greater speed, accuracy, and convenience when booking event related services. There further exists the need to provide
10 event service providers with a centralized store of data from which information concerning events may be queried and to which updated availability and other information may be inputted. In addition, there exists the need for a system which functions in connection with the dynamically changing data stored in such a database so as to most efficaciously meet the needs of attendees.

15 BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a system for providing event services, comprising a plurality of attributes defining the event, a means for an event planner to enter the attributes into at least one database and to subsequently adjust the attributes, an event registration system possessing internet connectivity to the event web
20 page, the event registration system further comprising, at least one server in communication with the database, at least one application on each server capable of communicating with at least one external entity and at least one of the databases so that the data in the at least one database can influence the operation of the at least one application, and a means for a user to access the database and interact with the attributes.

25 A second embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that the event web page establishes internet connectivity to the event registration system through the utilization of an electronic connection.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned
30 system wherein the system is further characterized in that the event registration system performs at least one event related task from the list consisting of: an event registration task whereby an attendee is registered for an event, an event transportation task whereby

the attendee procures travel accommodations related to the event, an event housing task whereby the attendee procures housing accommodations related to the event, an event entertainment task whereby the attendee procures entertainment accommodations related to the event, an event commerce task whereby the attendee procures products and services
5 related to the event, an event non-commerce task whereby the attendee procures products and services not related to the event, an event scheduling task whereby the attendee could schedule meetings, and an event marketing task whereby the attendee or the external entity could utilize event data located on at least one centralized database to facilitate the process of marketing.

10 Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that the event registration system is comprised of at least one external entity from the list consisting of: airline entities providing airline related services, car rental entities providing automobile transportation related services, hotel entities providing lodging related services, entertainment entities
15 providing entertainment services, a registration entity for managing event registration, and third party intermediary entities through which may be accessed airline related services, automobile related services, lodging related services, and entertainment related services.

Yet another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that at least one of the applications
20 exchanges information across the internet with an event attendee utilizing the event web page, exchanges information with any or all of the external entities, and interacts with at least one of the databases.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that at least one of the applications
25 enables each of the external entities to access data stored upon at least one of the databases.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that access to data stored upon at least one of the databases by each of the external entities is restricted by at least one of the
30 applications based upon the user id of the external entity.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to a method for performing event registration and reservation comprising the steps of: gathering attendee information

via the internet, executing computer application code on a computer in response to the attendee information, the code interfacing with at least one event related entity connected to the computer via the internet, and altering the functioning of the computer application code based upon additional information received from at least one of the attendee,
5 information received from at least one of the event related entities, or data stored in a centralized database.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to a method for determining and utilizing the characteristics of event attendees comprising the steps of: gathering event related attendee information via an electronic connection, storing the
10 attendee information in a database, querying the database for event related data, and performing analysis on the queried event related data to create attendee profiles.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned method wherein the analysis on the queried event related data is used to perform at least one additional operation from the list consisting of: procuring products and services for a
15 plurality of the attendees, targeting the provision of additional data to one or more of the attendees based on the created attendee profiles, and monitoring incentive programs.

Yet another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to a system for performing attendee management for event registration and reservation comprising: a plurality of the attributes specified for the event, an event meeting planner web page
20 displaying the web page, an event registration system possessing electronic connection to the event meeting planner web page, the event registration system further comprising: at least one server, at least one centralized database located in or accessible to each of at least one of the servers, at least one application on each at least one of the servers capable of communicating with at least one of the databases whereby the data comprising one of the
25 databases can influence the operation of the one application, and at least one external entity possessing internet connectivity to the event registration system capable of interacting with at least one of the applications.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that the event meeting planner web
30 page and the at least one server reside in the same physical location.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that the event meeting planner web

page establishes internet connectivity to the event registration system through the utilization of a user configured, dynamically built event website.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that the event registration system
5 performs event related tasks including one or more of: an event registration task whereby an attendee is registered for an event, an event transportation task whereby said attendee procures travel accommodations related to said event, an event housing task whereby said attendee procures housing accommodations related to said event, an event leisure,
recreation and entertainment task whereby said attendee procures entertainment
10 accommodations related to said event, an event task whereby attendee procures eCommerce products and services related to the event comprising computer and other hardware rentals, decorating services, telco, wireless and electrical services, a non-event task whereby attendee procures eCommerce products and services related to day-to-day business activity, an event task whereby an attendee schedules meetings related to or
15 ancillary to the event, and an event task whereby an attendee utilizes demographic and other data to market to the overall event attendee universe.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that the external entities further include one or more of: airline entities providing airline related services, car rental entities
20 providing automobile transportation related services, ground transportation entities providing transportation related services, hotel entities providing lodging related services, entertainment entities providing entertainment services, recreation entities providing organized and non-organized recreation related services, leisure service entities providing leisure travel and tour related services, a registration entity for managing event
25 registration, third party intermediary entities through which may be accessed airline related services, automobile and all ground related services, lodging related services, and entertainment, leisure and recreation related services.

Yet another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that at least one of the applications
30 exchanges information across the internet with an event attendee utilizing the event planner web page, exchanges information with any or all of the external entities, and interacts with at least one of the databases.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that at least one of the applications enables each of the external entities to access data stored upon at least one of the databases.

5 Yet another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the aforementioned system wherein the system is further characterized in that access to data stored upon at least one of the databases by each of the external entities is restricted by at least one of the applications based upon the user id of the external entity.

10 Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to a method for performing event registration and reservation comprising the steps of: gathering attendee information via the internet or traditional methods, executing computer application code on a computer in response to the attendee information, the code interfacing with at least one event related entity connected to the computer via the internet, and altering the functioning of the computer application code based upon additional information received from at least one of
15 the attendee, information received from at least one of the event related entities, or data stored in a centralized database.

Another embodiment of the present invention is drawn to a system of determining group purchasing behavior based upon the sum of multiple events in the database and utilizing such data for marketing and advertising to the attendee database those services
20 and products most likely to be purchased by the attendee based upon past purchasing patterns of the individual attendee or attendees with similar demographic/psycographic profile: further utilizing such data to procure products and services for all event attendees through efforts including one or more of: consolidated procurement of event related and other ancillary products and services, promotional advertising and other targeted discounts
25 and value added products and services for attendees, incentive programs for attendees and meeting planners, event organizers and sponsors; and for multiple event purchases and repeat usage of registration, reservation and ancillary products and services.

The details of one or more embodiments of the invention are set forth in the accompanying drawings and the description below. Other features, objects, and advantages
30 of the invention will be apparent from the description and drawings, and from the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a functional diagram of an architecture for event registration as known from the prior art.

FIG. 2 is functional diagram of the present invention's architecture for event registration

FIG. 3 is an illustration of a sample event web page.

FIG. 4 is an illustration of a sample attendee registration web page.

FIG. 5 is an illustration of a sample hotel information web page.

FIG. 6 is an illustration of a hotel booking web page.

FIG. 7 depicts a schematic illustration of an airline transaction

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

As used herein, "internet" refers to a computer network made up of two or more interconnected networks. "Web page" refers to one page of a document on the World Wide Web usually written in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML). "Hypertext link" is any graphic or textual element on a web page that, when clicked upon or otherwise selected by one viewing a web page, may facilitate access via the internet to additional information. Uniform Resource Locator, or "URL," is an internet address which tells a browser where to find an internet resource. "Event meeting planner" is any individual or group of individuals exercising control over the characteristics of an event or meeting. "Entertainment related services" include all services related in whole or in part to the provision of services including, but not limited to, leisure and recreational services. An "electronic connection" is any logical or physical connection through which digital or analog data may be transmitted. "eCommerce" is any form of commerce involving the transaction of goods or services enabled, in whole or in part, by the exchange of digital data.

The architecture of the present invention is described with reference to Fig. 2. Event registration architecture 110 is comprised of a centralized event registration system 150. Event registration system 150 is in direct, bi-directional contact with event meeting planner 120 and is linked utilizing an internet connection 121. This link is accomplished through the use of a hypertext link provided to the event meeting planner 120 and tied to a URL unique to the resources available to the event meeting planner 120. Event

registration system 150 is enabled to perform, among other tasks, the centralized processing of event registration task 122, event transportation task 124, event housing task 126, and entertainment notification task 127. Event registration system 150 is connected via the internet to third party registration intermediary 128, third party travel intermediary 134, third party housing intermediary 136, airline entity 130, car rental entity 132, and hotel entity 136 through the use of appropriate URLs. While illustrated with reference to the performance of discrete tasks involving communication with discrete event related entities, the present invention could be similarly extended to communication with any other event related entity in order to perform a desired task.

Event registration system 150 is comprised of server 162. Server 162 is comprised of applications 164 (a), (b), etc. and database 160. Each application 164 is capable of communicating with third party registration intermediary 128, third party travel intermediary 134, third party housing intermediary 136, airline entity 130, car rental entity 132, and hotel entity 136 as is required via electronic communication links 121.

Electronic communication links 121 provide internet connectivity both from and to server 162. These links may be comprised of any of a number of communication mediums through which digital data may be exchanged including, but not limited to, phone lines, cable links, and T1 lines. Information received from any external entity or intermediary by any application 164 may be stored in database 160. Database 160 typically resides within the RAM portion of server 162. Database 160 could additionally contain static, archival data saved on a more permanent medium such as a hard drive, a data CD or a zip drive and may be attached to server 162. While the present embodiment makes use of a single server 162, the same functionality could be realized utilizing multiple servers in electronic communication with each other server. The server or servers may reside anywhere where internet connectivity is established and enabled between the server or servers and the entities external thereto with which internet connectivity is required to perform the logical functions of each application 164.

Event meeting planner 120 is illustrated as a discrete application linked via internet connection 121 to event registration system 150. Event meeting planner 120 is more fully illustrated with reference to Fig. 3. Event meeting planner 120 is implemented as comprising event web page 310. While event meeting planner 120 comprised of web page 310 is illustrated as residing separate and apart from server 162, event meeting planner

may reside on server 162 as well. In this instance, event meeting planner 120 is said to be "self hosted." Event web page 310 is composed of HTML source code either dynamically created or statically stored and retrieved by server 162 in internet connectivity with the viewer/attendee and sent via the internet to be viewed utilizing a web browser. Suitable web browsers include Netscape Navigator TM by Netscape Communications Corporation of Mountain View, California and Microsoft Internet Explorer TM by Microsoft Corporation of Redmond, Washington. When displayed on a web browser, event web page 310 appears as a collection of graphic and textual elements. For example, program graphic 320 is an illustration related to the program of an event event. Selecting program graphic 320 through an interaction with a Graphical User Interface (GUI) invokes hypertext link 321. The manner of selection may include, but is not limited to, clicking a computer mouse on program graphic 320. Hypertext link 321 is a link to a series of web pages providing information on membership. Hypertext link 321 may be invoked by clicking on a graphic, as here, or as a textual link. The source code of the web pages which may be accessed by an attendee clicking on member hypertext link 321 may be created or stored on server 162 as illustrated in Fig. 2. In similar fashion, the attendee may access web pages related to the attributes of the locale of the event, as indicated by destination graphic 322, by clicking on destination hypertext link 323. While graphics and text contained upon event web page 310 are illustrated with respect to program and destination information, any number or manner of other graphic and textual materials could be incorporated into event web page 310 and linked to other web pages via hypertext links including, but not limited to, hotel, tour, and registration information.

Additional links incorporated into web page 310 may include links to facilitate an event commerce task. The event commerce task could comprise appropriate hypertext links to additional web pages, either dynamically or statically provided by server 162, to allow the attendee to procure eCommerce products and services related to the event including, but not limited to, computer and other hardware rentals, decorating services, telco, wireless, and electrical services. A similar link incorporated into web page 310 may include links to facilitate a non-event commerce task. The non-event commerce task could comprise appropriate hypertext links to additional web pages, either dynamically or statically provided by server 162, to allow the attendee to procure eCommerce products and services related to day-to-day business activity. An additional link incorporated into

web page 310 may include links to facilitate an attendee scheduling task. Attendee scheduling task could comprise appropriate hypertext links to additional web pages allowing the attendee to schedule meetings either related to or ancillary to the event. Yet an additional link incorporated into web page 310 may include links to facilitate an event marketing task. Event marketing task could comprise appropriate hypertext links to additional web pages allowing the attendee and other event related entities to utilize demographic and other event derived data to facilitate the marketing of goods and services.

Event web page 310 may also include multiple other hypertext links 324, 325 which provide connectivity via the internet to server 162. Server 162 is a component of event registration system 150. When an attendee clicks a hypertext link 321, 323, 324 from event web page 310, connectivity is established with event registration system 150. When an attendee accesses event registration system 150 via event web page 310, an application running on server 162 receives the information passed to it, proceeds to either retrieve statically defined HTML code or dynamically create HTML code, and sends the resulting code back to the attendee. Upon receipt of the data, the attendee's web browser converts the HTML code into a viewable registration web page 410 as illustrated in Fig. 4.

Fig. 4 illustrates registration web page 410. The event organizer can create and maintain the graphic elements of event web page 310, registration web page 410, and subsequent web pages invoked therefrom possessing any desirable attributes. The processes, services, and functionality provided to an attendee once linked to event registration system 150 from event web page 310 are predefined and contracted by the event organizer vis-a-vis the operator of event registration system 150. Means for entering these attributes comprise, but are not limited to, a GUI interface to a database or other data repository or any other manner of data entry which facilitates electronic storage of the data so entered. Once connected to event registration system 150, the attendee's further choices and internet interaction is controlled by applications 164 running on server 162 and comprising event registration system 150. Registration web page 410 is illustrated as comprising event transportation graphic 424 and event housing graphic 426. Associated with each graphic is a hypertext link to event transportation link 425 and event housing link 427 respectively. Clicking on any event link in registration web page 410 invokes the execution of a corresponding application 164 (a), (b), etc. on server 164.

Referring to Fig. 2, each application 164 interfaces with the appropriate third party intermediary or entity as required, retrieves and stores data from and to database 160, and interfaces with the attendee through a series of additional web pages which are dynamically created by application 164 and transmitted via the internet to the attendee. In this manner, the attendee is presented options and information acquired from entities and third party intermediaries regarding the execution of desired event related tasks via the applications 164 comprising event registration system 150. It is not necessary to form a direct link between the attendee and an individual entity or third party intermediary. For example, if the attendee clicks on event housing link 427, application 164 responsible for performing event housing task 126 might construct and transmit to the attendee a web page comprising entry fields requesting information about hotel preferences, dates of stay, etc. Acting upon receipt of the requested information from the attendee, event housing task 126 might link via the internet to hotel entity 138 and third party housing intermediary 136. While there is illustrated only one hotel entity 138 link, it is probable that many such links will exist between event registration system and a plurality of hotel entities 138. For example, application 164 might query Marriott, Clarion, Embassy, and Westin separately for data relating to room prices and availability. The results of these queries by application 164 may be embedded in HTML source code by the application 164 and transmitted via the internet to the attendee.

Far from merely linking the attendee to already existing sources of entity data such as that of Clarion or Clarion's existing registration and information web pages, application 164 running on server 162 to complete event housing task 126 performs programmed logic upon attendee requests submitted via the internet, gathers the data from connected entities required to process attendee's request, composes the response HTML code comprised of the gathered data, and responds back to the attendee in a form capable of being viewed by the attendee in web page format. As a result, application 164 is designed and constructed to interface with each travel related entity and third party intermediary to both query the availability of services and to contract and confirm reservations, tickets, etc. Referring to the previous example, once attendee has clicked upon event housing link 427, application 164 in charge of executing event housing task 126 constructs and transmits to the attendee hotel information web page 510 as illustrated in Fig. 5. When the attendee enters the required data in data fields 512 and clicks on search button 514, the information is sent to

the appropriate application 164 which then electronically contacts via the internet each hotel entity 138 and third party intermediary 136 which has been configured to interact electronically with event registration system 150. In this example, the response composed by application 164 and returned to attendee might include a web page as illustrated in Fig. 6.

Hotel booking web page 610 includes a table which displays information, including hotel name and price/room/night, as well as entry fields for the attendee to enter a desired attributes such as smoking preference. While this example is for illustrative purposes only, other fields displayed might include information on different room attributes (single, double, TV, view, etc.) as well entry fields for date of reservation and the like. After entering the required responses in the data entry fields 612, the attendee clicks on data submission link 614. Clicking on data submission link 614 causes the data entered in data entry fields 612 to be sent via the internet to application 164. Application 164 commences to perform subsequent logic required to complete event housing task 126.

This logic may include data retrievals from server 160, travel entities and third party intermediaries, data storage on database 160, and any other application defined code required to complete the desired event task. Every time a task is completed, a record of the pertinent information which defines the results of the task is stored in database 160. The architecture of the present invention requires the attendee to interface with applications 164 centrally located on event registration system 150 via internet connection 121 and applications 164 connect to each external travel entity or third party intermediary. By coordinating the exchange of data between the attendee and all external travel entities and third party intermediaries, applications 164 are capable of maintaining a centralized record of all transactions in database 160. Applications 164 can therefore include logic which draws upon the data recorded in database 160 to accomplish many tasks including secure access to data, information updating, and cross application coordination. By providing a centralized repository with which all applications 164 may communicate, the applications 164 can work in a coordinated manner to accomplish a plurality of event tasks important to the attendee.

For example, each individual entity, third party intermediary, and the event meeting planner, can query the database 160 for data. Means to accomplish this access includes, but is not limited to, a GUI interface through which an entity may interact with

data stored on an electronic medium. It is preferable to have access to this data protected by a secure means of access. One method of accomplishing this is to allow the entity requiring access to have internet based connectivity with database 160 through an application 164 defined interface which restricts the submission of database 160 Structured Query Language (SQL) queries based on user id and password. For example, a Clarion employee may be able query all hotel registration information delimited by a column or row attribute equal to "Clarion." Any information related to other hotels would be restricted from access the Clarion employee. The returned rows and columns would preferably be comma delimited, text fields capable of being read by software such as Microsoft Excel by Microsoft Corporation of Redmond, Washington. While this illustration suggests a relational database accessed by SQL commands and the results analyzed through a PC based application, many different hardware and software components are capable of accomplishing a similar result.

By empowering individual entities to monitor data in this manner, several efficiencies arise over the prior art. Real time access to registration information retrieved from database 160 allows entities to monitor the utilization of their services in real time. Because event registration system 150 may be utilized to simultaneously carry out event related tasks for multiple events and store the results in a single database 160 or a plurality of databases 160 in contact with each other, entities can determine the utilization of their services across all events. For example, Clarion could query database 160 and discover that all fifty rooms offered to a particular event meeting planner 120 at a special rate have been reserved by attendees. If Clarion discovers that the rest of the hotel is underutilized during the span of time corresponding to the event, it may wish to increase the number of rooms offered at the initial special price. With regards to the event meeting planner 120, consider the following. Suppose, for example, that Clarion and Marriott both require a minimum of twenty event attendees to register for rooms at their hotels or the event meeting planner 120 is liable for a financial penalty. Suppose further that event meeting planner 120 queries database 160 and discovers that there are currently twenty attendees registered for rooms at Clarion but only ten registered at Marriott. The ability to query attendee utilization of different hotels in this instance provides an opportunity for the event planner 120 to dynamically restructure the options provided by application 164 to the attendee when carrying out event housing task 126.

What is required, and what is provided by the present invention, is a method whereby event entities, third party intermediaries, and the event meeting planner can dynamically interact with database 160 to update database information which will affect the operation of applications 164. Referring to the preceding example, Clarion wishes to
5 extend to attendees an additional ten rooms at the special rate agreed upon with the event meeting planner 120. Clarion may, by utilizing a secure access methodology dependent upon user id and password verification, issue SQL commands to update database 160 elements which record the maximum number of rooms available at the special rate. Similarly, event meeting planner 120 may wish to update a flag in database 160 associated
10 with each hotel entity 138 which identifies availability. By setting this flag to a value indicating non-availability, application 164 will not display the non-available hotel entity 138 as an option to the attendee when it creates and sends to the attendee hotel booking web page 510. In this manner, event meeting planner 120 can restrict options to attendees so as to balance the allocation of reservations amongst the plurality of hotel entities 138 in
15 order to achieve price efficiencies.

An additional aspect of the ability of event entities, third party intermediaries, and the event meeting planner to dynamically interact with database 160 is the ability to query data from database 160 and to perform analysis upon the data. In this manner, the database 160 may, acting alone or as part of an historical metadatabase containing the
20 aggregated data from more than one database 160, serve as an historical database from which additional information may be derived. For example, statistical analysis may be conducted to discover patterns and similarities in the behavioral characteristics and tendencies of attendees across a spectrum of different events. This analysis could be used to target marketing materials and advertisements for goods and services most appropriate
25 for a given attendee possessing a particular demographic/psychographic profile, for procuring products and services for a plurality of attendees at group discounts, for targeting the provision of additional data to one or more of the attendees based on their profiles, and for monitoring incentive programs.

While the preceding examples deal with application 164 utilizing database 160 to
30 accomplish event housing task 126, the same methodology may be utilized to perform any event related task including event registration task 122, event transportation task 124, and event entertainment task 127. When performing event housing task 126, application 164

interfaced with each hotel entity individually, formatted a resulting hotel booking web page 510 which contained options available to the attendee, and proceeded to retrieve further attendee data as required, interface with hotel entities 138 as required, and reformat and send to attendee additional web pages as required to complete event housing task 126.

- 5 When interacting with a third party intermediary such as third party travel intermediary 134 to accomplish event transportation task 124, application 164 will likely function in a substantively different manner. For example, application 164 may preferably interact with a third party travel intermediary 134, such as Sabre by Sabre Incorporated of Dallas, Texas, to query and report to attendee plane flight options. Sabre will likely return to
10 application 164 an array of data corresponding to available flights matching attendees itinerary, along with prices, availability, etc. This data is returned to application 164 to be formatted into a web page capable of being viewed by attendee so as to reserve a flight. However, this data is likely not prioritized. In the preceding example, event meeting planner 120 was able to restrict data concerning certain hotel entities 138 from being
15 displayed to the attendee by updating the database 160 to indicate non-availability of the hotel entity 138. Third party travel intermediary 134 returns information on multiple airline entities 130. If this information was simply passed on to the attendee, the event meeting planner 120 would be unable affect the information supplied to the attendee.

- The present invention allows the event meeting planner 120 to specify flight and
20 other travel information in database 160 in a manner capable of interfacing with application 164 so as to affect the functioning of application 164. For example, with reference to Fig. 7, event database 160 may be updated to display to attendee flights available through event registration system 150 for the event which originate in Chicago only on United Airlines. As a result, entering data in an application produced web page,
25 attendee would supply, via the internet, application 164 performing event transportation task 124 information consisting of the point of origin from which attendee wishes to depart to the event. Application 164 would interface with third party transportation intermediary 134 and receive data concerning available flights. As is illustrated, third party transportation intermediary 134 is returning information about three flights, all to San
30 Francisco, one originating in Detroit, two originating in Chicago, and all flights using the carriers U.S. Airways, Southwest Airlines, and American Airlines. Before formatting the data to be read by attendee in the form of web page 701, application 164 deletes all flight

information concerning flights originating in Chicago and replaces it with event meeting planner 120 data stored in database 160. As is illustrated, web page 701 does not show to the attendee any flight originating in Chicago on a carrier other than United Airlines. In this manner, event meeting planner 120 can restrict the flow of travel information to the attendee even when the information is returned to application 164 containing information relating to several airline entities. In a similar manner, group rate discounts which are not provided by third party transportation intermediary 134 can be inserted into web page 701.

Performance of event entertainment task 127 is unique in the manner in which it is configured by event meeting planner 120. While event meeting planner 120 may have arranged special deals with various travel related entities including hotel entities 138, airline entities 130, and car rental entities 132, it is likely that event meeting planner 120 will have no expertise with or knowledge of entities which can provide entertainment in the city in which the event is being held. Particularly for organizations which hold annual meetings in different cities every year, there is a need to be able to offer to attendees entertainment opportunities external to the event which will encourage attendance at the event. Because event registration system 150 has centralized access to all of the databases 160, it may create, store, and provide to event meeting planners 120 access to its database 160 containing information on entertainment opportunities in selected cities. For example, if event meeting planner 120 specifies San Francisco as the locale of an event, event entertainment link 429 can invoke an application 164 which will provide attendee with information regarding entertainment opportunities in San Francisco, application 164 thus executing event entertainment task 122, could offer tickets to local operatic performances, city tours, or the like. Because this city data is centralized, the event entertainment link can be identical for a plurality of event meeting planners 120 planning separate events utilizing a common event registration system 150 and holding their events in the same city. By posting their entertainment services on an event registration system 150 which simultaneously services a plurality of events simultaneously, entertainment entities may extend bulk discounts on tickets to event registration system 150, such savings being passed on to each attendee regardless of the individual event which they are attending. This efficiency both lowers the price of entertainment offered to the attendee and entices attendance at the event.

Another advantage arising from the centralized database 160 of event registration system 150 is the ability to perform cross application coordination. One drawback of present systems is the inability to confirm travel arrangements in real time. As many attendees hesitate to register for an event before confirming travel plans, this drawback has a negative effect on event registration. With the present invention, each event task stores information regarding its completion in database 160. Because each task is performed and verified over the internet in real time, an attendee may quickly arrange for travel and lodging before deciding whether or not to proceed to registration. In addition, present systems often confirm reservations directly with the attendee. For example, hotel reservations may be facilitated through phone or fax communication with an event agent, but, once booked, are confirmed through direct communication between the chosen hotel and the attendee. As a result, cancellation of attendance at the event may require the attendee to coordinate with a multiplicity of entities to cancel travel and lodging reservations. The present system allows integration between applications 164 performing event related tasks. For example, if after reserving or booking a hotel stay through application 164 performing event housing task 126 the attendee discovers through another application 164 performing event transportation task 124 that there is no suitable airline fare to be had, attendee may decline to register for the event and cancel existing hotel reservation. Upon deciding not to register, an application 164 may be invoked which will query database 160 for all transactions completed by the attendee, and proceed to cancel all existing reservations made by the prospective attendee. In this manner, considerable time and effort is avoided by the attendee.

While the preceding detailed description of the invention is drawn to a run time implementation of the event registration system, additional technological details comprising the invention are as follow. Aspects of the invention are identified by the term "Depth." Depth is defined in this context as: attention to detail, sophistication, leverage of knowledge concerning capital and industry experience, networking of contacts, business support and complexity. The inventive system design and database schema (High level definition: Relational and object oriented database layout, object or table contents and linkage design) has been architected to support and store some of the most complex event and group registration and reservation scenarios.

Workflow (High level definition: Transaction processing order and business process hand-over's) scripting, web page order scripting, business process scripting support for event and group registration and reservations. In addition, capabilities for an automated (internal to a customer company) approval and procurement authorization
5 process have been designed for inclusion into the support system.

Current and planned inventive staff resources and knowledge collateral encompass a superset of the knowledge capital and experience required for both the group and events space, and the attendant and peripheral support services. Representative knowledge and experience includes, but is not exclusive to: event and group setup and planning, event
10 and group marketing and promotion, target 1:1 marketing, database marketing, decision support, data mining and campaign management, event and group call center and administrative support infrastructure and travel reservation bookings and changes, and event and group attendee on-line registration.

Other aspects of the invention are defined by the term "Breadth." Breadth is
15 defined in this context as: Wide variety and completeness of services, products and innovative support infrastructure. A non exclusive listing of some of the main services and products comprise: an event meeting planner for determining the attributes of an event, an event meeting planner web page, and an event registration system possessing internet connectivity to the event meeting planner web page.

20 The present invention supports system integration reliability and flexibility. The inventive system design and database schema (relational and object oriented database layout, object or table contents and linkage design) has been architected to reliably support and store some of the most complex event and group registration and reservation transactions and data transfers between systems. This ability is critical to support "data
25 and transactional integrity" (High level definition : The accurate storage and representation of transactions and the data to support and record the transactions). System and business architecture is designed to be distributed (for scalability, data privacy, geographic location, access speed and other reasons) to different customers and 3rd party service provider sites. The present invention provides for distributed transaction integration and support. Non
30 exclusive examples of this include: cash management (checks, accounts, credit card approval, transactions) and other payment processing, imports, exports, batch and online data transfers, and content .

The present invention additionally supports a holistic and complete service and or (web enabled and next generation to web technology) product offering, with the architecture, power, training, knowledge capital, support infrastructure, specialist resourcing and flexibility to be offered singularly, or bundled with a suite of related services, in one or more combinations (not exclusively limited to): a hosted ASP (Application Service Provider), a Business to Business product or application (Business to Consumer product usage is possible, but this is likely to have less immediate market opportunities due to the strong initial focus on group and event activities), resold and or re-branded to a Business (Non exclusive examples: Hotel, Airline, Fortune 1000 company etc), Organization (Non exclusive examples: IEEE etc) or Service provider (Non exclusive examples: Tour agent, American Express Travel etc) as a combined product and or service offering, or outsourcing of business process and activities (not exclusively limited to) call center, travel services, event registration and reservations setup and management, onsite event coordination and management, content provision, attendee management, (event and product) sales and marketing, marketing campaign management services, target marketing and 1:1 marketing services.

The present invention supports metadata, auto code generation and process automation of event and group activities and concepts. Metadata is data about the characteristics and configuration of computer systems and their business support activities. Such data primarily applies to data about the content, setup, configuration and storage requirements of events and group activities. A secondary application is related to associated non event or group specific activities that attendees and organizers would choose to associate with the event (Non exclusive examples: Non block hotel bookings, guest bookings, entertainment, restaurants, non group travel etc)

Auto Code Generation or automatic generation of system code and configurable system interactions supports either private or administrative roles (Non exclusive examples: event organizer, telephone PBX, subscription lists, mailing lists, attendee profiles, hotel registration etc), as well as public or attendance and participative roles (Non exclusive examples: Event attendees registration and profiles, travel and housing reservations etc) screens, pages, PDA and wireless and other web enabled (and next generation to web technology) interactions. The automation of business processes involves wizards, just in time training, customer self help and training and thought

leadership.

One or more embodiments of the present invention have been described. Nevertheless, it will be understood that various modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Accordingly, other embodiments are
5 within the scope of the following claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An internet based system (110) for providing event services, comprising:
 - a plurality of attributes defining said event;
 - a means for an event planner (120) to enter said attributes into at least one
 - 5 database (160) and to subsequently adjust said attributes;
 - an event registration system (150) possessing internet connectivity to the event web page (310), said event registration system (150) further comprising:
 - at least one server (162) in communication with said database (160);
 - 10 at least one application (164) on each server (162) capable of communicating with at least one external entity and at least one of said databases (160) so that the data in said at least one database (160) can influence the operation of said at least one application (164); and
 - 15 a means for a user to access said database (160) and interact with said attributes.
2. The system of claim 1 further characterized in that the event web page (310) establishes internet connectivity to the event registration system (150) through the
- 20 utilization of an electronic connection.
3. The system of claim 2 further characterized in that the event registration system (150) performs at least one event related task from the list consisting of:
 - an event registration task (122) whereby an attendee is registered for an
 - 25 event,
 - an event transportation task (124) whereby said attendee procures travel accommodations related to said event,
 - an event housing task (126) whereby said attendee procures housing accommodations related to said event,
 - 30 an event entertainment task (127) whereby said attendee procures entertainment accommodations related to said event,
 - an event commerce task whereby said attendee procures products and

services related to said event,
an event non-commerce task whereby said attendee procures products and
services not related to said event,
an event scheduling task whereby said attendee could schedule meetings,
5 and
an event marketing task whereby said attendee or said external entity could
utilize event data located on at least one centralized database (160)
to facilitate the process of marketing.

- 10 4. The system of claim 3 further characterized in that the external entities further
comprise at least one external entity from the list consisting of:
airline entities (130) providing airline related services,
car rental entities (132) providing automobile transportation related
services,
15 hotel entities (138) providing lodging related services,
entertainment entities (135) providing entertainment services,
a registration entity (128) for managing event registration, and
third party intermediary entities through which may be accessed airline
related services, automobile related services, lodging related
20 services, and entertainment related services.
5. The system of claim 4 further characterized in that at least one of said applications
(164) exchanges information across the internet with an event attendee utilizing the
event web page (310), exchanges information with any or all of said external
25 entities (130, 132, 135, 138), and interacts with at least one of said databases (160).
6. The system of claim 5 further characterized in that at least one of said applications
(164) enables each of said external entities (130, 132, 135, 138) to access data
stored upon at least one of said databases (160).

30

7. The system of claim 6 further characterized in that said access to data stored upon at least one of said databases (160) by each of said external entities (130, 132, 135, 138) is restricted by at least one of said applications (164) based upon the user id of the external entity (130, 132, 135, 138).
- 5
8. A method for performing event registration and reservation comprising the steps of:
- gathering attendee information via the internet;
- executing computer application code on a computer in response to said attendee
- 10 information, said code interfacing with at least one event related entity connected to said computer via the internet; and
- altering the functioning of said computer application code based upon additional information received from at least one of the attendee, information received from at least one of said event related entities, or data stored in a centralized
- 15 database (160).
9. A method for determining and utilizing the characteristics of event attendees comprising the steps of:
- gathering event related attendee information via an electronic connection;
- 20 storing said attendee information in a database (160);
- querying said database (160) for event related data; and
- performing analysis on said queried event related data to create attendee profiles.
10. The method of claim 9 wherein the analysis on said queried event related data is
- 25 used to perform at least one additional operation from the list consisting of:
- procuring products and services for a plurality of said attendees,
- targeting the provision of additional data to one or more of said attendees based on said created attendee profiles, and
- 30 monitoring incentive programs.

11. A system for performing attendee management for event registration and reservation comprising:
- a plurality of the attributes specified for said event;
 - an event meeting planner web page (310) displaying said web page;
 - an event registration system possessing electronic connection to the event meeting planner web page (310), said event registration system (150) further comprising:
 - at least one server (162);
 - at least one centralized database (160) located in or accessible to each of at least one of said servers (162);
 - at least one application (164) on each at least one of said servers (162) capable of communicating with at least one of said databases (160) whereby the data comprising one of said databases (160) can influence the operation of said one application (164); and
 - at least one external entity (130, 132, 135, 138) possessing internet connectivity to the event registration system capable of interacting with at least one of said applications (164).
12. The system of claim 11 further characterized in that both the event meeting planner web page (310) and the at least one server (162) reside in the same physical location.
13. The system of claim 11 further characterized in that the event meeting planner web page (310) establishes internet connectivity to the event registration system (150) through the utilization of a user configured, dynamically built event website.
14. The system of claim 11 further characterized in that the event registration system (150) performs event related tasks including one or more of:
- an event registration task (122) whereby an attendee is registered for an event;
 - an event transportation task (124) whereby said attendee procures travel

accommodations related to said event;
an event housing task (126) whereby said attendee procures housing
accommodations related to said event;
an event leisure, recreation and entertainment task whereby said attendee
procures entertainment accommodations related to said event;
an event task whereby attendee procures eCommerce products and services
related to the event comprising computer and other hardware
rentals, decorating services, telco, wireless and electrical services;
a non-event task whereby attendee procures eCommerce products and
services related to day-to-day business activity;
an event task whereby an attendee schedules meetings related to or
ancillary to the event; and
an event task whereby an attendee utilizes demographic and other data to
market to the overall event attendee universe.

15. The system of claim 14 further characterized in that the external entities (130, 132, 135, 138) further include one or more of:

airline entities providing airline related services;
car rental entities providing automobile transportation related services;
ground transportation entities providing transportation related services;
hotel entities providing lodging related services;
entertainment entities providing entertainment services;
recreation entities providing organized and non-organized recreation related
services;
leisure service entities providing leisure travel and tour related services;
a registration entity for managing event registration;
third party intermediary entities through which may be accessed airline
related services, automobile and all ground related services, lodging
related services, and entertainment, leisure and recreation related
services.

16. The system of claim 15 further characterized in that at least one of said applications (164) exchanges information across the internet with an event attendee utilizing the event planner web page (310), exchanges information with any or all of said external entities (130, 132, 135, 138), and interacts with at least one of said databases (160).
17. The system of claim 16 further characterized in that at least one of said applications (164) enables each of said external entities to access data stored upon at least one of said databases.
18. The system of claim 17 further characterized in that said access to data stored upon at least one of said databases (160) by each of said external entities (130, 132, 135, 138) is restricted by at least one of said applications based upon the user id of the external entity.
19. A method for performing event registration and reservation comprising the steps of:
- gathering attendee information via the internet or traditional methods;
 - executing computer application code on a computer in response to said attendee information, said code interfacing with at least one event related entity connected to said computer via the internet; and
 - altering the functioning of said computer application code based upon additional information received from at least one of the attendee, information received from at least one of said event related entities, or data stored in a centralized database (160).
20. A system of determining group purchasing behavior based upon the sum of all events in the database (160) and utilizing such data for marketing and advertising to the attendee database those services and products most likely to be purchased by the attendee based upon past purchasing patterns of the individual attendee or attendees with similar demographic/psycographic profile:
- further utilizing such data to procure products and services for all event attendees

through efforts including one or more of:

consolidated procurement of event related and other ancillary products and services;

promotional advertising and other targeted discounts and value added products and services for attendees;

incentive programs for attendees and meeting planners, event organizers and sponsors; and

for multiple event purchases and repeat usage of registration, reservation and ancillary products and services.

10

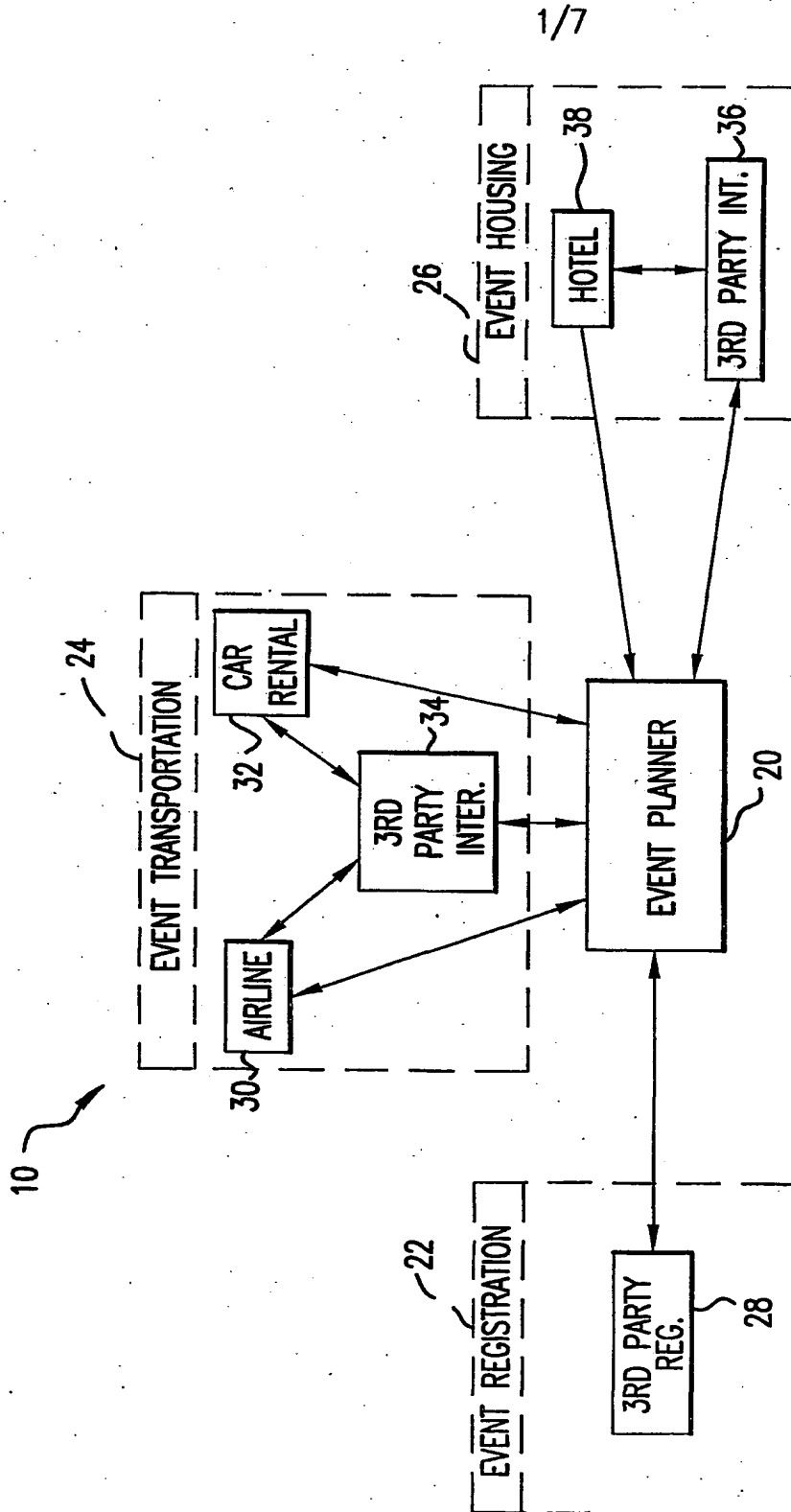


FIG. 1 PRIOR ART

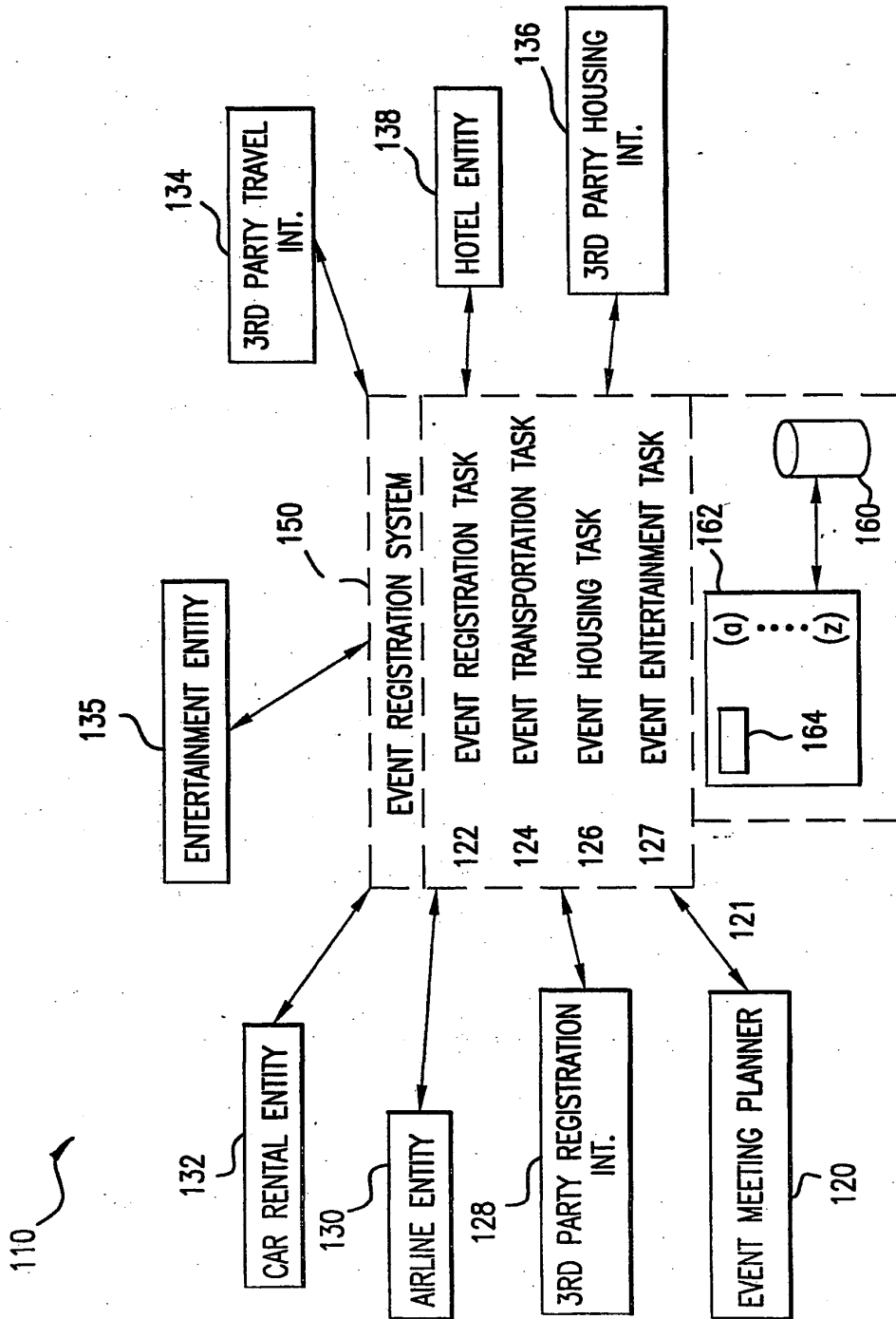
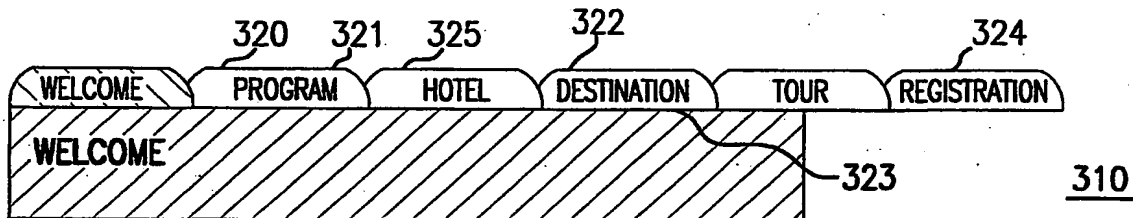


FIG.2

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2000 ABC TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE



2000 ABC TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

The annual ABC Travel Technology Conference is just around the corner! This year we will meet for three days in the city of San Diego from April 5th through April 7th, 2000. Our format will allow you to gain valuable insights ranging from important plans and directions to business integration solutions for common business issues.

There are two easy ways to register for this year's conference. You can submit the registration information included in this packet, or you may enroll online at www.b-there.com/demo

We encourage you to sign up as soon as possible!

All you need to do is click on the Registration button to register for this event. Please have your credit card ready.

Our conference will begin with an enlightening overview by ABC's Chief Executive Officer. In addition, our conference agenda incorporates various speakers who will share their ideas with you, and provide you with the information that is bound to improve your day to day business operations.

Our conference will also be the first opportunity for many of you to meet the new Executive Vice President of Technology, Margaret Smith. Margaret will address the subject of Web based registration and reservation solutions for the meeting/event and tradeshow organizers.

If you are registering for the conference on the Internet, just click on the tabs at the top of the page to view all the respective details.

We look forward to seeing you in April!

FIG.3

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2000 ABC TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

424 425 425 424 426

☒ **PROFILE** **AIR** **CAR** **HOTEL** **PAYMENT** **CONFIRMATION** **HOME**

427 **410**

Review Previous Reservation

Please complete the following information, using one form per person:

Please select one: ☒ Attendee ☐ Event Staff
☐ Exhibitor

Prefix: ▼

Name: First:
Last:

Title:

Company:

Address 1:

Address 2:

City:

Province/State:

Zip/Postal Code:

Country:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Primary Job Responsibilities: ▼

Name for Badge (i.e., Bob for Robert)

Badge Name

PLEASE SELECT ONLY ONE:

☐ Member Registration - \$400.00

☐ Non Member Registration - \$600.00

GUEST

☐ Wednesday Reception and Dinner - \$175.00

☐ Thursday - Reception and Dinner - \$100.00

FIG.4

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PROFILE	AIR	CAR	HOTEL	PAYMENT	CONFIRMATION	HOME
HOTEL RESERVATION				510		

Please select the hotel you prefer. Your reservation is automatically confirmed when you choose a hotel provided that we receive all of the required information.

Search for Hotel Choices

Please specify the dates and type of room you would like and then click search to find available options.

Check In Date	04/05/2000	▼
Check Out Date	04/06/2000	▼
Room Type	Single	▼

Search

514

512

FIG.5

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2000 ABC TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AIR	CAR	HOTEL	PAYMENT	CONFIRMATION	HOME
PROFILE						610

Housing: Availability Search

= Shuttle Bus to Airport = Shuttle Bus to Event

Select One	Available Housing Options	Click for Map
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 612	Clarion Hotel - \$189.00 660 K Street	
72 Hour Cancellation Policy		
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 612	Embassy Hotel - \$189.00 601 Pacific Highway	
72 Hour Cancellation Policy		
<input type="radio"/>	Marriott Hotel - \$189.00 333 West Harbor Drive	
72 Hour Cancellation Policy		
<input type="radio"/>	Westin Hotel - \$179.00 910 Broadway Circle	
72 Hour Cancellation Policy		

☒ Non-Smoking Room ☐ Smoking Room

☐ Require Special facilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

Roommate 1—First Name Last Name 612

Roommate 2—First Name Last Name

Roommate 3—First Name Last Name

Special Hotel Requests

FIG.6

SAVE YOUR SELECTIONS

614

Clicking "Save Your Selections" will take you to the next part of the reservation system.

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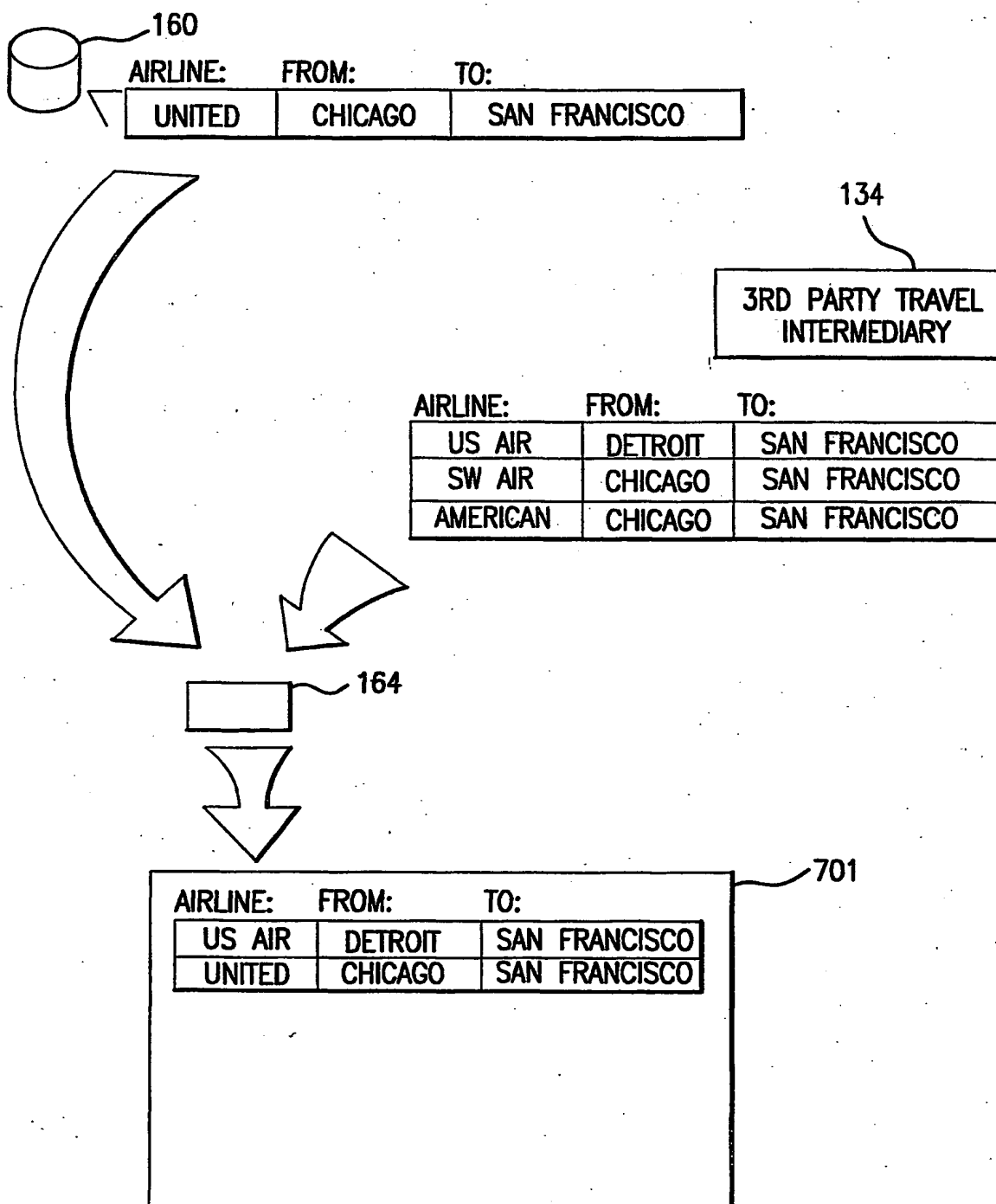


FIG.7

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US01/06237

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : G06F 17/60
US CL : 705/5

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
U.S. : 705/5

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
EAST, Dialog, Internet

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5,832,451 A (FLAKE et al) 03 November 1998 (03.11.1998), Abstract, column 2, lines 9-36.	1-20
Y	US 5,732,398 A (TAGAWA) 24 March 1998 (24.03.1998), Abstract, columns 2-6.	1-20
Y	US 5,648,900 A (BOWEN et al) 15 July 1997 (15.07.1997), Abstract, columns 1-2.	1-20
Y	US 5,237,499 A (GARBACK) 17 August 1993 (17.08.1993), Abstract, columns 2-3.	1-20
A	US 5,948,040 A (DELORME et al) 07 September 1999 (07.09.1999), Abstract.	1-20
A	US 6,018,715 A (LYNCH et al) 25 January 2000 (25.01.2000), Abstract.	1-20
A	US 5,940,803 A (KANEMITSU) 17 August 1999 (17.08.1999), Abstract.	1-20
A	US 5,634,016 A (STEADHAM, JR. et al) 27 May 1997 (27.05.1997), Abstract.	1-20

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T"

later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X"

document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y"

document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&"

document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

24 May 2001 (24.05.2001)

Date of mailing of the international search report

20 JUN 2001

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

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